

NPSG

NOVEMBER
2006



NATIVE PLANT STUDY GROUP

Living with Mosses: Stories from the World of Bryology

Dr. Terry McIntosh is a born storyteller and his entertaining and informative presentation on: *Living with Mosses: Stories from the World of Bryology*, introduced us to the intriguing and fascinating subject that has become his passion. In his talk, he told us about why and when he started getting interested in mosses. His interest grew in New Zealand in the late 1970's where he became fascinated with the lush flora of bryophytes (mosses and liverworts) and lichens found there. He especially was attracted to a very tall moss, *Dendroligotrichum dendroides*, which resembles a diminutive Norfolk Island pine. He returned from New Zealand and, because of a life-long love of open spaces and dry country, completed a PhD on arid-land bryophytes of British Columbia at UBC. It was during his work at UBC that he became a printmaker, producing numerous prints based on lichen images that stuck with him from New Zealand. Since then he has collected bryophytes not only in many habitats across BC, but also in the drylands of Alberta, Oregon, Washington, and Idaho, along the east coast of Kamchatka and the Kuril Islands, and across the Yukon north slope. During his talk, he showed us images of many of the rare mosses and a few liverworts (especially species of *Riccia*) from across BC. We saw images of Garry oak habitat

mosses such as the rigid apple moss (*Bartramia stricta*) and the oak twisted moss (*Syntrichia laevipila*). We also learned that many coastal habitats have been relatively unexplored for bryophytes and still need attention. We saw images of many of the rare and unique dry-land mosses that reside mainly in south-central BC. These included the alkaline wing-nerved moss (*Pterygoneurum kozlovii*) found near alkaline sloughs and the Columbian carpet moss (*Bryoerythrophyllum columbianum*) found living in some biological crusts in sagebrush habitats. Terry informed us about his recent work with the moss genus *Schistidium* for the Flora of North America project. Mosses, he told us, are a very difficult group to get to know. The terminology and necessity to study microscopic characters make learning the mosses difficult, but it is very rewarding.

Not a lot of useful books are available these days to study bryophytes, although, if you can find a copy, 'Mosses and Other Bryophytes: An Illustrated Glossary' by Bill and Nancy Malcolm is a wonderful book to help learn, through photographs, the structure of bryophytes. Although much of Terry's work centers around rare mosses, he believes that, in the long term, conservation efforts will best be served by studying 'rare' or regionally unique habitats, many

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of which, at present, don't have 'protection' or consideration because they lack rare plant or animal species. Terry's enthusiastic, amusing and passionate descriptions of mosses, liverworts and lichens no doubt awakened new interest in the world of bryology in most of the members fortunate enough to be in attendance for his presentation. Terry has generously offered to come back in fall 2007 and hold a workshop on moss identification for the Native Plant Study Group, date to be announced later.

SPEAKER SCHEDULE

January 18

Richard Winder

Mycological Meanderings

Fall rains bring thoughts of fabulous fungi, but spring is also a season that harbours delectable mushroom delicacies. Join Dr. Richard Winder, director with SVIMS (South Vancouver Island Mycological Society) on an ecological and identification journey into the world of mushrooms.

February 15

Adolf Ceska

Taxonomy is Fun!

Dr Ceska is one of BC's foremost authorities in all things botanical and a tireless leader of countless native plant and mycological sorties. Adolf will share stories of ferns and fern allies of British Columbia that show how botanists tackle their taxonomic problems. (This is a rather high-brow topic, but Adolf assures me that it will be fun!)

March 15

Andrea Schiller

For Better or Worse?

Andrea Schiller is a federal lands natural resources specialist involved in adaptive management techniques for rare species management. Learn about the ongoing attempts to preserve rare species on federal lands through invasive species removal.

April 19

Briony Penn

Dr. Briony Penn has garnered many awards and much attention in her crusades to preserve the natural world and enlighten the public. Her enthusiasm and passion for the environment as well as her creative problem solving infuse Briony's writings, lectures and personal appearances. You don't want to miss this presentation!

May 17

David Blundon

Grasses Are Too Hard!

Ever felt like a subject is just too hard to attempt? But wouldn't it be wonderful to impress your friends and family with your astonishing grasp of grass identification?

Grasses and grass-like plants could be considered the foundation of our woodland, grassland and terrestrial herbaceous communities. Which are native and which are usurpers? David Blundon, Biology Chair at Camosun College, will take us on a virtual identification tour of our local graminoids.

The Native Plant Study Group meets on the third Thursday of the month from September through May except December at 7 pm in Rm D116, MacLaurin Building, UVic. Please join us. Membership fees are \$15.00 annually and a \$2.00 charge for drop-in.

ODDBALL



I have a lovely wild ginger (*Asarum caudatum*) that has just bloomed (in mid-Nov!). They are usually a late spring blooming species of moist bottomlands.

NPSG WEBSITE

Check out our beautiful new website at www.npsg.ca which has been built through the talented efforts of Valerie Elliott and Stephan Jacob of ID2 Communications: www.id2.ca

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EVENTS AND OUTINGS

Sat Nov 18, 1 pm
Forest to Seashore stroll and hike, Witty's Lagoon.
Meet at Nature Centre off Metchosin Road.

Sun Nov 19, 10 am
The Wonderful Mushroom Hunt with Adolf and Oluna Ceska. Metchosin Wilderness Park, meet at the Clapham Drive Access. By donation (eg \$5). Sierra Club.
Tracie 415-6071 Outings2@sierraclub.bc.ca

Sun Nov 19, 1 pm
Horth Hill Hike, tip of Saanich Peninsula. Meet at info kiosk in parking lot off Tatlow Rd. CRD Parks, all ages

Tues, Nov 21
Botany night
Wildlife Trees of British Columbia.
This is a launching of a beautiful Lone Pine book on wildlife trees in British Columbia. Join one of the book authors, Mike Fenger, for this event and have your copy signed! 7:30 p.m. at the Swan Lake Nature House. Everyone is always welcome.

Sat Nov 25
Ragley Farm Benefit for The Land Conservancy.
All proceeds from farmgate sales to TLC. Certified organic vegetables, preserves, freshly baked pies, muffins and bread from outdoor brick oven. 5717 East Sooke Rd



FALSE PIXIE CUPS
CLADONIA SP.



MUSK-FLOWER
MIMULUS MOSCHATUM

Sun, Nov 26
Mushroom Study Session Field Trip
Please note this is an observation trip, not intended for collecting. Bring lunch, snacks and drinks for the all day outing. Meet at UVic Parking Lot 6 near the Chapel at 10:00 a.m. (free parking on weekends). No pets please. Contact Agnes at 721-0634 or (thelynns@shaw.ca)

Sun, Dec 3
Heritage Trees Field Trip
Exploring Victoria's Heritage Trees - Part II - Western Communities
Explore native and non-native trees in the Western Communities. Meet at the Park & Ride opposite the entrance to Royal Roads University on Sooke Rd at 10:00 am for car-pooling. Bring lunch, snacks and drinks for the all day outing. No pets please. Contact Agnes at 721-0634 or (thelynns@shaw.ca)

Tues, Dec 12
The Other Side of the Pacific
Bill Merilees' travels from Japan to Nome Alaska.
7:30 p.m. in room 159 of the Fraser building at UVic.

Sat, Dec 16
Victoria Christmas Bird Count
Contact Ann Nightingale at 652-6450 (motmot@shaw.ca)

Sat Dec 18, 2 -4 pm
Native Plant Gardening Workshop.
Compost Ed Centre, 1216 North Park St. \$15.
386-WORM to register.

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Sat Dec 18, 11 am-1 pm
Composting Basics Workshop.
Compost Education Centre, 1216 North Park St.
Free. 386-WORM to register.

Sat, Dec 23
Sooke Christmas Bird Count
Denise Gubersky at 642-3996 (dgubersky@telus.net)

VOLUNTEER and REGULARLY SCHEDULED ACTIVITIES

Oak Bay Native Plant Garden group meet every Fri.
from 9-11, weather permitting. Corner of Beach
Drive and Margate Avenue. New members welcome.
Guided walks in March and April.

Brighton Avenue Walkway Restoration.
Removal of invasives and re-planting of native species
in a Garry Oak rocky outcrop situation. Work each Sun.
9:30 - 11:30. Meet at Hampshire and Brighton, 2
blocks south of Oak Bay.

Garry Oak Restoration Project (GORP)
Volunteers Appreciated!
All Dates are on a Saturday from 9:30-11:30 am ex-
cept where noted.
Nov 18: Mahon Brook
Sheet mulch
Nov 19 (SUNDAY): Feltham Park
Remove ivy, blackberries and ivy
Nov 25: Camas Park:
Remove invasives, mulch
Dec 2: Wetherby Park:
Remove invasives, mulch
To volunteer contact Nathalie Dechaine at
dechainn@saanich.ca or 475-5475

For information on many environmental activities
check the Green Diary www.earthfuture.com/greendiary

CHRISTMAS NAUCORIA

For several years now renowned mycologists Adolf and
Oluna Ceska have been celebrating Christmas in a more
unusual manner than most of us. From about mid-Dec
through mid-Jan you might find them searching through
wet forests for the rare *Tubaria punicea* (formerly *Naucoria*



CHRISTMAS NAUCORIA
TUBARIA PUNICEA

vinicolor). This gorgeous wine-red 2-4 inch tall mushroom
is found only in a very specialised habitat- in the hollowed
out, eroded, rotting base of old arbutus trees. If you are
not out counting birds this holiday season, you might
try looking for these Christmas delights. I know I'll never
pass another of these trees without checking to see
what might be lurking within. If you find any, call Adolf
at 216-1481 and give them a Christmas gift to remember!
Below is a haiku dedicated to Adolf and Oluna.

*Christmas Naucoria
wine-red, arbutus hiding
rare and treasured gift*



CHRISTMAS NAUCORIA HABITAT

Tubaria photos by Adolf Ceska

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RELATED ORGANIZATIONS

Other very informative and associated organizations that deserve our support and recognition are the Victoria Natural History Society, the Native Plant Society of British Columbia and the Southern Vancouver Island Mycological Society (SVIMS). All work towards public education, appreciation and conservation of native plants and their habitats.

VNHS www.vicnhs.bc.ca

NPSBC www.npsbc.org

SVIMS www.svims.ca

BOOK REVIEWS

Hot off the press, local Metchosin resident Todd Manning and cohorts have written an excellent and informative book on wildlife trees and their values.

Wildlife and Trees in British Columbia by Mike Fenger, Todd Manning, John Cooper, Stewart Guy and Peter Bradford. \$29.95

From the RNS News:

“Wildlife trees are trees that provide vital habitat for other species. Their preservation is an essential component of maintaining the biodiversity of our forests and their protection is mandated under British Columbia's new Forest and Range Practices Act, enacted in 2004. This book explains what wildlife trees are and how they are used by 66 species of birds and mammals resident in British Columbia. It is designed for anyone with a professional or avocational interest in BC forests, from foresters and government planners to naturalists and woodlot owners to public policy advocates.”

<http://www.lonepinepublishing.com/cat/1-55105-071-4>

I am going to Mexico in December and have been looking assiduously for a field guide to Mexican flora. *Note to Andy MacKinnon and friends, your expertise is needed there!* After many searches at local bookstores and the Goldstream Nature House, I finally resorted to abebooks.com an amazing (locally produced) site that links booksellers of used books with consumers. We bought 2 older field guides to Birds of Mexico for \$1.00 and \$2.00 each. However finding anything about Mexican flora seemed impossible. One of the books my husband found was *A Naturalist's Mexico* by R.H. Wauer (itself an interesting find) and mentioned within the chapters and in the reference section I managed to find the names of a

55 couple of 1960-70s botanical guides. They haven't arrived yet but I'm quite excited to receive them. Meet *Flora Mexicana* by Pesman has 225 line drawings on roadside plants and cost about \$20.00 US. A *Handbook of Mexican Roadside Flora* by C. and B. Mason however tempting, was (way) outside my comfort zone at \$200-500 US. Two other books that I've found, ordered and am awaiting somewhat impatiently are *Desert Wild Flowers* by Edmund Jaeger (\$2.00) and *A Flower Lover's Guide to Mexico* by Phil Clark (\$5.00). Shipping is usually more than the cost of the books! Stay tuned and I'll let you know how the books turn out.

NATIVE PLANT STUDY GROUP

(Sub-group of the Victoria Horticultural Society)

The NATIVE PLANT STUDY GROUP is a non-political group dedicated to learning about B.C. native plants, as wild populations and in garden settings, and to supporting conservation of native plants and their habitats. The group is guided by a volunteer steering committee. Members are encouraged to volunteer for this committee. Participation in outside events, by the group, or by individual members using the NPSG name, is dependent on approval of the steering committee or, where indicated, by the at-large membership. Activities requiring funding must receive approval by the general membership.

Native Plant Study group members are required to become members of the Victoria Horticultural Society. Fees are \$25.00/yr and help pay for insurance to cover field trips. Send \$ to Box 5081 Stn. B, Victoria, V8R 6N3

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CORNUS CANADENSIS
BUNCHBERRY